

TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE



FISCAL NOTE

HB 2386 - SB 2613

February 21, 2022

SUMMARY OF BILL: Changes, from 30 days to 15 days, the length of time prior to an election in which a qualified voter may register to vote. Requires the Division of Elections (Division) to develop a system to enable persons to verify the status of their voter registration application in real time as denoted by a timeline. Requires the Division to make such system available to each county election commission to maintain on their individual websites.

Requires the Coordinator of Elections to develop and implement a uniform training program for poll watchers to be utilized by each county election commission 45 days prior to a federal primary election. Requires the Division to create a program for county election commissioners to recruit eligible persons from community colleges and high schools to become poll watchers.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Increase State Revenue - \$855,000/FY22-23 and Subsequent Years
/Strategic Technology Solutions

Increase State Expenditures -
\$211,700/FY22-23/Division of Elections
Exceeds \$53,500/FY23-24 and Every Four Years Thereafter

Increase Local Expenditures -
Exceeds \$1,033,600/FY22-23 and Every Two Years Thereafter*
Exceeds \$980,100/FY23-24 and Every Four Years Thereafter*
Exceeds \$926,600/FY25-26 and Every Four Years Thereafter*

Assumptions:

- Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 2-6-102, the early voting period begins 20 days prior to an election.
- The proposed language would extend the voter registration period to 15 days prior to an election, which would result in 5 days of voter registration overlapping with the early voting period.
- In order to process both voter registrations and voters participating in early voting during the five overlapping days, some counties will require additional computers and staff.
- According to information supplied by the Secretary of State (SOS), 214 polling locations will require an extra computer at an estimated cost of \$940 each.

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- The one-time increase in state expenditures for purchasing computers is estimated to be \$201,160 (\$940 per computer x 214 computers).
- Voter registration applications will be reprinted to reflect the correct voter registration deadline, resulting in a one-time increase in state expenditures of \$10,500.
- The total one-time increase in state expenditures is estimated to be \$211,660 (\$201,160 computer costs + \$10,500 application reprinting).
- Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 2-4-109, officers of elections, judges, machine operators, and inspectors shall be paid for their services on election-day a minimum of \$50 per day.
- The proposed language will result in an increase in expenditures exceeding \$53,500 (\$50 compensation x 214 early voting locations x 5 days of early voting) per election cycle.
- In years with a Presidential Preference Primary, the state will be responsible for such costs; therefore, in FY23-24 and every four years thereafter there will be an increase in state expenditures estimated to exceed \$53,500 for additional staff.
- In FY22-23 and every two years thereafter, there will be a mandatory increase in local expenditures exceeding \$107,000 (\$53,500 per election cycle x 2 election cycles) for the August primary and November general elections; and in FY23-24 and every four years thereafter, there will be a mandatory increase in local expenditures exceeding \$53,500.
- The Division would be required to create a system to enable persons to verify the status of their voter registration application in real time, and provide such system to each county election commission to maintain on their websites.
- The SOS currently contracts with the Department of Finance and Administration's Strategic Technology Solutions (STS) to maintain a secure voter lookup website at a cost of \$750 per month.
- For each county to maintain the same such system, there would be a recurring cost of \$855,000 per year (\$750/month x 12 months x 95 counties) as well as a corresponding recurring increase in state revenue to STS of \$855,000.
- All 95 counties would likely incur additional costs to create a website or update their current website, to be able to securely host voter information and Social Security numbers.
- There are 703 high schools and 13 community colleges in Tennessee.
- According to information provided by the SOS, the cost for a county election commission to recruit poll watchers would be approximately \$100 per visit per school.
- An estimated recurring increase in local expenditures of \$71,600 (716 schools x \$100 x 1 visit per year)
- The mandatory increase in local expenditures is estimated to be the following over the next ten-year period indefinitely:

Fiscal Year	Voter Lookup	Poll Worker Recruitment	Elections	Total
FY22-23	\$855,000	\$71,600	\$107,000	\$1,033,600
FY23-24	\$855,000	\$71,600	\$53,500	\$980,100
FY24-25	\$855,000	\$71,600	\$107,000	\$1,033,600
FY25-26	\$855,000	\$71,600		\$926,600
FY26-27	\$855,000	\$71,600	\$107,000	\$1,033,600
FY27-28	\$855,000	\$71,600	\$53,500	\$980,100

FY28-29	\$855,000	\$71,600	\$107,000	\$1,033,600
FY29-30	\$855,000	\$71,600		\$926,600
FY30-31	\$855,000	\$71,600	\$107,000	\$1,033,600
FY31-32	\$855,000	\$71,600	\$53,500	\$980,100

*Article II, Section 24 of the Tennessee Constitution provides that: *no law of general application shall impose increased expenditure requirements on cities or counties unless the General Assembly shall provide that the state share in the cost.*

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.



Krista Lee Carsner, Executive Director

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